

The Origin of the Semetic People



By Cheikh Anta Diop

Translated by Rkhty Amen

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

The Origin of The Semitic People

by Chiekh Anta Diops

Tranlated by Rkhty Amen

Cover Design by Metu

PROCESS OF SEMITIZATION

The peculiarity of the Semitic universe is that it is situated as much on the physical plane as on the cultural plane between the white Indo-European world and the black African world. Since the probable mutation of the Grimaldi Negroid in the Solutrean {20,000 B.C.} which marks the sudden appearance of Cro-Magnon man, the prototype of the white race, in the middle of France, during the last glaciation, there constituted a White universe clearly distinct from that of the Black on the double planes of physical and cultural anthropology.

There exist nothing comparable to a Semitic type. The Semitic world was born in protohistoric times, not of a biological mutation but of a crossbred issue from the confluence of Blacks and Whites in Western Asia. It becomes a mystery only when one tries to understand without taking into account its two aforementioned components which show the reality *sui generis*.

Archaeological facts confirmed by abundant testimonies contained in the Semitic literature itself (Biblical Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic, ect.) attest to the fact that all the actual habitats of the Semites were occupied originally, from pre history to the threshold of the historic epoch by Blacks who were not transient, but mixed with a White element who came from elsewhere.

At the end of the Mesolithic, 8,000 B.C., the area of expansion of the Capsian industry, characterized by thin metal plates in the shape of a half moon (crescent), was known from Kenya to Tunisia as far as Egypt and Palestine.

The human type associated with this industry in Palestine is the Natufian, studied by Miss Garrod and which is characteristic of Negroid. He is perhaps the distant ancestor of the Canaanites, that is to say Black people who, according to the Bible were the first occupants of the land which later came to be called Palestine and that the Israelites found in the country when they arrived as strangers about the Twelfth century B.C

"The Canaanites and the Perizzites inhabited the country at that time" (Genesis 13,7)

The Ras-Shamra text situates the homeland of the Phoenicians, contrary to all other attempts, in the Sudan near the Isthmus of Suez.

With respect to the Sabaeans, one notes in the Bible:

"The sons of Ham were, Mitsraim, Puth, Kush and Canaan. The sons of Kush: Saba, Havila, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtecha" (Genesis 10, 6-7).

The name Israel appears for the first time on a stele commemorating the victory of Merneptah (1230 B.C.), forth son of Ramses 11, Nineteenth Dynasty (8th cen. B.C.); it gives a list of names of the people conquered at the time of the invasions by the people of the sea". All the populations were at that time in the ethnographic age, including the people of Israel, whereas Black Egypt already had 2,000 years of written history.

An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth states Genesis, a moral sufficiently primitive compared to the moral precepts of the Egyptians of the same epoch.

In the Twelfth century B.C. the Philistines attacked the coast of the land of Canaan, Ramses 111 destroyed their fleet, capturing all the people and converting them to agriculture. Incidentally, Palestine owes its name to the Palestiou, which is what the Egyptians called the Philistines in their texts.

These White tribes established themselves with the digenous Black Canaanites, producing the Northern Semitic branch. The ancient Semites were much darker than certain Semites of today, as it is revealed on the figurines and drawings from that epoch.

They were of the same type as Othello.² Since the occupation of Persia, Greece and Rome, the movement of populations at the time of the Crusades in the Middle Ages and the racial mixing which occurred, contributed to modifying appreciably, now and then, the ethenic type and the restoring of the European type.

These remarks apply a fortiori to those groups of Semitic ancestry who lived among Europeans for centuries.³ It is the same with certain Arab Semites who are mixed with Persians. From the numerous citations provided by Strabo⁴ on the Sabaeans, from the Quran, the Muslim tradition and all the Arab writers one can prove that, the Sabaeans who preceded the Arabs on the Arabian peninsula were indubitably Blacks and are always described as so. Only Western ideologists continue to falsify the facts because nothing can ever the caricatural images that were impressed upon them from their most tender childhood.

The Bible states, God said to Abraham:

“ know of a surety that your descendants will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and will be slaves there, and they will be oppressed there for four hundred years; but I will bring judgment on the nation which they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great riches “ (Genesis 15,13)

This passage relates to the captivity of the Israelites in Egypt, a Black nation, issue of Ham.

The Biblical verses recount in an explicit manner, which allows for no error of interpretation, the accounts of dependence which existed between the black Egyptian nation and the minority Jewish emigrants. This then is clearly the reason for the curse of Ham.

“When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, he said: Cursed be Canaan! a slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers. He also said: Blessed by the Lord God be Shem; and let Canaan be his slave! God increase the possessions of Japheth, that he may dwell in the tents of Shem and let Canaan be their slaves.” (Genesis 9, 24-25)

He didn't know to attract the readers attention to the fact of this curse, which is that they were the slaves of the moment (the Jewish minority in captivity in Egypt) who struggled against the ruler of the day (the black Pharaoh of Egypt that the Bible heeds well to class among the Japhetites or the Semites.).

In the face of the technical superiority of black Egypt at that time, the Jewish minority could only take a Messianic attitude and one of revenge in their passionate Prophecies, comparable in all

points to our condemnations.

“And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour; and they made their lives bitter with hard burdens, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them to serve, was with rigour.” (Exodus 1, 11-14)

“And they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities Pithom and Raamses, to serve the storehouses of Pharaoh.” (Exodus 1, 11-12)

One last remark on the historical conditions of the curse;

It was put on Canaan one of the sons of Ham who in fact dwelt in the country coveted by the Hebrews “I will give to you and all your descendants after you, the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.” (Genesis 17,8)

Even in ancient Elam, in Susiana (excavated by Dieulafoy), to Mohenjo Daro in the Indus valley, archeology reveals the earlier presence of Blacks.

It follows from that which preceded that the Melanesian culture served as a substratum pre and proto-historic and some- times historic to the Semitic culture of the land of Canaan (Phoenicia to Palestine) to the land of Saba (Arabia), ect••

This explains the sometimes curious relationship that one can establish between two universes which Western ideologists love to present as foreign to each other.

In particular, if as the Bible states, the Hebrews entered Egypt as 70 individuals grouped in 12 patriarchal families, and left Egypt 400 years later, 600,000 strong, it is certain that they had borrowed all the elements of their culture from Egypt. The nation of Israel only existed by their reaction against the Egyptian nation. Egyptian culture resounds throughout the Old and the New Testaments. Studies should be devoted to the verification of facts attesting to this influence. 6

On the linguistic plane one can distinguish Canaanite and Aramaic in the North, Arabic and Abyssinian in the South.?

The oldest Canaanite sources are the glosses in the letters written in the Babylonian language and in cuneiform characters by the minor Palestinian vassals of the Fifteenth century B.C. of the Egyptian Pharaoh Amenophis IV; these documents were recovered at El Amarna in Upper Egypt. Next to the El Amarna glosses, the oldest monument in the Canaanite language is the Triumphant inscription of the Moabite king Mesa (circa 900 B.C.) discovered in 1869 and now preserved in the Louvre.

It already shows essentially all the grammatical peculiarities and stylistics which characterize the Canaanite dialect, the best known being Hebrew.

The oldest Hebrew monument is the chant of Deborah (Judges 5) which dates back to the epoch of the conquest of the land of Canaan by the Hebrews. That is to say more than 1000 years B.C. How did it happen that the Hebrew language which penetrated by conquering the land of Canaan, agree on all essential points with the language of the ancient inhabitants of the country?

All which preceded permits one to dispel the idea of an original parent. This is the reason for which the Hebrew tradition itself only reserved the second case; according to the tradition the Hebrews adopted the languages and places of worship of the Canaanites. Thus it is not surprising that the Semitic languages do not present vis-a-vis the Black languages an automatic morphology, syntax, and lexicon comparable to those of Indo-European, considered under the same angle. However Hebrew became a dead language during the Hellenistic epoch and ceded its place to Aramaic in all of anterior Asia; it partially survives in the religious literature (Book of Sarah 200 B.C.). After Hebrew the most important Canaanite dialect was Phoenician attested by numerous inscriptions stirring from the Ninth to the Tenth century B.C., to the Fifth century A.D., and that could be read thanks to some Punic verses given by Plato in his *Phoenissae*.

In the Fifth century Punic coexisted with Latin and the Berber dialects. Concerning Aramaic, since the Fourteenth century B.C., the Arimi of Ahlami (to the West of Mesopotamia) are known by Babylonian and Assyrian text. The most ancient Aramaic inscriptions are those of the Princes of Sam'al found in the locality of Zmguli; one among the inscriptions had the non-Semitic name Panamu.

Aramaic supplanted Assyrian. When the Persians succeeded the Assyrians, Aramaic had already become an internationally known language. It had also absorbed the Canaanite dialects, of which it sustained the former's influence.

In fact, Aramaic was not the language of invading nomads come from outside but the result of an evolution in place of the popular Mesopotamian language ..the popular written language, which follows the cuneiform in almost all of Western Asia is Aramaic. Therefore it wouldn't be the language which properly belongs to the invading Arameans. This is the evolution of the popular written language, making its appearance with the ancient literary language, as Demotic was born of the hieroglyphs" 8

The Nabateans were in the First century A.D. Arabs utilizing solely Aramaic as a written language.

Aramaic was the dominant language in Palestine during the time of Christ. In the First century the Nabatean Arabs utilized it as a written language, however it disappeared to the West with the conquering Arabs. The city of Edessa in the North of Mesopotamia was the center of Aramaean culture in the first centuries of Christianity and several translations of the Bible were executed in Aramaic.

Arabic and Ethiopic form the meridional branch of Western Semitic in opposition to the Northern branch composed of Aramaic and Canaanite. During the Persian and Roman epochs the Arabs constituted the Aramaean culture. All the concepts relative to civilization are expressed in Arabic by Aramaic words.

SOUTHERN ARABIC

The alphabet of the Southern Arabic inscriptions is derived directly from Phoenician. There existed three types of ancient inscriptions in the area between Damascus to the Northern Hedjaz: Thamudenic, Lihyamic, and Safahitic, but they were supplanted by Aramaic writing of the Nabataean Arabs. The oldest text found, written in the Arabic language, dates from 328 A.D.; this inscription is from the tomb of an Arab chief from En Nemara, near Damascus; next comes the inscription of Zahad near Alep 512-513 A.D. and the one from Hauran to the South of Damascus (568 A.D.); the first offers besides a Syriac text, that is to say Aramaean, a Greek text, and the second a Greek text. These are

the sole written traces of the Arabic language before Mahammed, traces of which in addition introduces the pre-Islamic poetry. This poetry also remained oral.

The South Arabian peoples had adopted the Canaanite alphabet to transcribe their principal dialects: Sabaean and Minaean; there existed perhaps a third dialect, Hadhramaut.

Sabaean and Minaean are known from numerous inscriptions certain of which are very long, having a religious nature and also containing technical architectural expressions which renders an exact translation difficult. The older and the more recent inscriptions (Sixth century A.D.) shows that the language had not evolved much. The Arab conquest over the Sabaean was total and complete. The South Arabic dialects proper are preserved only on the Southern coast. Mahra, etc., Ge'ez spoken in Ethiopia are linked to this group: the oldest inscription in Ge'ez would be that of King Ezana 350 A.D. accompanied by an inscription in Sabaean characters; likewise the more recent inscription of King Ela Amida is also written in Sabaean characters.

About this time the Ethiopians introduced an important innovation in their writing system by modifying internally the consonant forms; they succeeded in transcribing the vowels which up to that time hadn't been rendered in other Semitic alphabets. However Ge'ez lost preponderance with the last of the ancient Royal languages of Axum about 1270 and was finally replaced by Amharic.

Therefore, perhaps a so-called Semitic language is the Maternal language of a Black people but the case is never encountered for an Indo European language. That brings us to the conclusion that Semitism is the result of interaction of the Black world and the White world in Western Asia; moreover the Ethiopians, Sudanic Nilotes, Copts, and the present day Egyptians furnish us with the different stages of the process of Semitization, anthropologically, physically, and culturally from one anterior black state. That brings to mind the difference in scale compared to the Black American who overcame the barrier'.

It happens all the time that a primitive Black habitat is progressively submerged by a leucoderm element: the land of Canaan, Southern Arabia, etc. A new cultural complex, linguistic and anthropological appeared which people loosely call 'Semitic'.

The case of the Berbers is typical in this regard.

The Berbers are certainly not a white-skinned Paleo-african issue of the supposed Ibero-Maurusian race, believed to be the ancestors of the Guanches, in effect, it is then a question of an hypothesis without any scientific value; there exist between these two groups a gap that the given facts of prehistory doesn't permit to be filled. In order for the gap to be filled, the hypothesis must be admissible, it might have been necessary to be able to follow without interruption from the Upper Paleolithic to the Neolithic age, the existence of a white-skinned people from Africa, but, this is however revealed impossible; Ibero-Maurusian man became extinct without leaving posterity which would link them to the Neolithic African race, but these are Blacks and nothing but Blacks, perhaps descendants of the Black (Negroid) race of Mechta-El-Arbi: of the Capsian. It was so in 1300 B.C. about the Nineteenth Egyptian Dynasty, an epoch in which the 'people of the sea' were conquered by Egypt, stranded in Cyrenique (Lybia), and progressively dispersed to the Atlantic ocean, from the Nasamons to the Getules, and they became the Berbers of history. At the time of the 'round heads', even in a region as far North as the Tassili N Adjer, one only found Blacks in the Sahara; where are the white-skinned people of this ?;oc ? It would be vain for one to search for them in the Neolithic before the invasions of the people of the sea, unless one adopts the clearly elastic definitions of Craniometry, even in that case, one cannot point out any human stock.

Besides, it would indeed be interesting to date the Ibero Maurusian fossils of Africa by the collagen in the bones, taking care not to mix the bones of different individuals. The quantity of bones found permits us to proceed with C.14 dating.

The Berbers are then ancient Indo-Europeans who were aculturated on African land, with a string of dialects from Tehenou (Lybia), a kind of sabir, in which one finds some survivals of Germanic Indo-European, mainly in the phonology.

Nothing is as foreign to ancient Egyptian as the Berber conjugation system, ect.. The origin of the Guanches in the Canaries certainly does not date back to 10,000 years BP, which would be necessary if one wanted to link them to the Ibero-Maurusian of the Mesolithic. These populations couldn't gain the islands after the invention of navigation, that is to say in the Neolithic, and for an epoch remained quite slow.

Terminology of the Koran

The ancient capital of the Sabaeans is the old city of Mareb, today in ruins. The ruins give the impression that it was perhaps two cities face to face. The riches and abundance of resources were proverbial.

The Sabaeans had irrigated the whole country by the construction of a series of dams which the Himyar utilized after them. 9

"The Sabaeans left a dam of freestones which collected the waters of the Wadi Danne at Mareb. This dam was damaged in 450 and 540 A.D. and was restored in 542 as attested by an inscription. During the time of Mohammed, from lack of maintenance, it ceased to function and the desert encroached upon the country." It is in Southern Arabia that the Biblical tradition situates the "Earthly Paradise", represented as an eternally green garden.

Those African languages which most resemble the Semitic languages are called Cushitic or Hamitic (the popular terms for this language group): Somali, Saho, Galla, Danakil, Bichari, Hausa, ect.; when it concerns the Canaanites or the Sabaeans, it results from that which preceded that they were Black people who spoke a language that we call today Semitic, these languages were properly theirs; they had no reason to borrow them from a neighbouring Semitic people, it is the contrary which has been attested. We know this, thanks to the terminology of the Semites themselves. Thus it would be wrong to consider the Ethiopians as descendants of ancient 'Negrofied' Semites or Blacks, speaking a borrowed Semitic language: they are the descendants of the black Sabaeans, and as such speak an indigenous language which is properly theirs. It was so in 1300 B.C. about the Nineteenth Egyptian Dynasty, an epoch in which the 'people of the sea' were conquered by Egypt, stranded in Cyrenique (Lybia), and progressively dispersed to the Atlantic ocean, from the Nasamons to the Getules, and they became the Berbers of history. At the time of the 'round heads', even in a region as far North as the Tassili N Adjjer, one only found Blacks in the Sahara; where are the white-skinned people of this epoch ?

It would be in vain for one to search for them in the Neolithic before the invasions of the people of the sea, unless one adopts the clearly elastic definitions of Craniometry, even in that case, one cannot point out any human stock.

Besides, it would indeed be interesting to date the Ibero Maurusian fossils of Africa by the

collagen in the bones, taking care not to mix the bones of different individuals. The quantity of bones found permits us to proceed with C.14 dating.

The Berbers are then ancient Indo-Europeans who were acultured on African land, with a string of dialects from Tehenou (Lybia), a kind of sabir, in which one finds some survivals of Germanic Indo-European, mainly in the phonology.

Nothing is as foreign to ancient Egyptian as the Berber conjugation system, etc..

The origin of the Guanches in the Canaries certainly does not date back to 10,000 years BP, which would be necessary if one wanted to link them to the Ibero-Maurusian of the Mesolithic. These populations couldn't gain the islands after the invention of navigation, that is to say in the Neolithic, and for an epoch remained quite slow.

Their imported writing systems link them to the Berbers and shows that, if there was a need, then the succeeding epoch was relatively late and is situated at the threshold of the historic epoch if not fully in the historic epoch.

We can better understand now why certain roots are common to the African languages and to the Semitic languages, without being due to borrowing the former from the later.

Example:

Egyptian	Walof	Arabic
Tef: spit	Tef: spit	Tef: spit
Tefnet: Goddess issued from the saliva of the God Ra.	Tefnit: Tef: spit Teflit; Tefli: spittle, spit	Tefilat: spit
Nit: a certain person Ntwi: citizen, townsman	Nit: to be human	
Sih; Seh: noble	Sih; Seh: Blessed; where twins come from.	Cheikh: Lord
Ynm: skin	Yaram: human or animal corps	sadam: human skin
-hsb (Pyr-w-3-166)	hasab-	hasaba-
- en- eye (W-1 189) ect. ect.	yen- eyebrow	ain- eye

The oldest rock drawings, prehistoric, found in Saudi Arabia, and reproduced at the Riyad Museum reveal a Negro type with traces of crossbreeding.

(1) See below; cf. also p.37

(2) See Anteriorite des civilisations negres: Mythe ou verite historique ?, pl. 42 and reproductions from the Palace of Maria.

(3) "the Khasar component" of Kastler supports this theory

(4) Matriarchate, Caste system, ect., so many cultural traits which link them to the Southern world.

(5) "They served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians." From Herodotus we learn that this was the reason why the Egyptians established the difference between themselves and the Greeks. "For this reason no Egyptian man or woman will kiss a Greek man, or use a knife, or a spit, or a caldron belonging to a Greek, or taste the flesh of an unblemished ox that has been cut up with a Greek knife." Herodotus, Histories, Book 11 c. 41.

(6) In the Canticle of Exodus which celebrates the glory of Yaweh after crossing the Red Sea, one finds this curious verse, "Who is like you among the Gods, Oh Eternal one ?" (Exodus 1_5,11).

(7) Brockelmann, Precis de linguistique semitique, 1910.

(8) Edouard Naville, L'evolution de langue egyptienne et les langues semitiques. Paris, Paul Geuthner, 1920, p. 102.

(9) Sura 34, verses 14-19 (see commentators note). Le Coran, Translation by Regis Blachere, Paris Larose, 1956.

(10) According to Tixier, the typologist, they would have come from the Sudan or Maghreb. However, allowing them prehistoric origins does not permit us to retain the idea of a white Sudanese race from the Upper Paeolithic. Was it then Ibero Maurasian man? Cf. Tixier, J., Les apports de la strati graphie et de la typologie au probleme des origines de l'homme moderne dans le Maghreb. Unesco, 1971.

